

SENATOR HALL: So in other words it would stay...in essence it would stay the same for the next two years. This...

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: In terms of an increase it would be constant for two years.

SENATOR HALL: Thank you.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Nelson.

SENATOR NELSON: Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I stand, of course, in support of Senator Johnson's amendment and I think that it bothers me, I guess something terrible, that people in my region and all over the state and the support that we have with programs completely underfunded and actually that is what brought my attention in the first place. And it bothers me that we do have this amount of money not spent last year when the staff and the people and the need is there. And might I call to you the exact amount of money; \$109,679 in mental health, and for alcohol and drug abuse programs, \$726,620. And I hope that through our effort and our work that we can get a little more communication and maybe get the program working out a little bit smoother than maybe it has in the past. And I want to commend Senator Johnson for his help on this and I ask you to support the amendment.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Okay, thank you. Senator Vard Johnson, would you like to close on your amendment, please.

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker and members of the body, I do hope that I have made myself relatively clear on a fairly complicated issue. All I am trying to do is to make certain that we provide reasonable increases in general fund appropriations for two very, very important organizations in our state. I am of the opinion that if we went with LB 280A as currently written, the Governor would veto it. We would be put to the test of finding 30 votes. If we found 30 votes and simply overrode the veto, those organizations would have a whale of a lot of money but we wouldn't have that much for our general fund budget. I think the better part of discretion is to cut the amount down to a reasonable level that we can all stand on and justify. If the Governor vetoes that, then we can come back and we can override with some feeling of responsibility. So that is what I am trying to do.